

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15
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R 281848Z FEB 78
FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6081
INFO AMCONSUL ALEXANDRIA
AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY NICOSIA
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

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E.O. 11652: NA
TAGS: PEPR EG XF PINS
SUBJECT: GOE MEASURES AGAINST PALESTINIANS IN EGYPT

REF: CAIRO 06318

1. DURING FEBRUARY 27 ADDRESS TO PEOPLES ASSEMBLY
CONCERNING LARNACA INCIDENTS (SEPTTEL), PM SALEM ANNOUNCED
THAT GOE WOULD SUBMIT DRAFT LEGISLATION REVOKING "SPECIAL
PRIVILEGES" PREVIOUSLY ACCORDED PALESTINIANS LIVING IN
EGYPT. PALESTINIANS IN EGYPT WOULD, ONCE LEGISLATION
ENACTED, BE TREATED "LIKE OTHER ARAB NATIONALS". RATHER
THAN ACCORDED "SPECIAL FACILITIES" IN VIEW OF THEIR
"NATIONAL PLIGHT". SALEM STATED THAT "THOSE WHO CLAIM
LEADERSHIP OF PALESTINIAN PEOPLE . . . HAVE SOLD THEM-
SELVES ENTIRELY TO REJECTIONIST FRONT. THEY HAVE TO
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BEAR CONSEQUENCES OF THEIR STAND." ON OTHER HAND, SALEM
SAID THAT EGYPT CANNOT FORGET PALESTINIAN PEOPLE UNDER
ISRAELI OCCUPATION: "IT IS THEY WHO REALLY SUFFER."

2. AKHBAR REPORTS THAT FOLLOWING PRIVILEGES TO BE TAKEN
FROM PALESTINIANS: RIGHT TO WORK WITHOUT OBTAINING
WORK PERMIT; RIGHT TO HOLD POSITIONS IN GOE OFFICIAL

OFFICES; RIGHT TO RESIDE ABROAD WHILE MAINTAINING PERMANENT RESIDENT STATUS; FREEDOM FROM PAYMENT OF RESIDENCE FEES; FREEDOM TO MAKE UNRESTRICTED CURRENCY TRANSFERS; FREE ENTRY AND EXIT VISAS; RIGHT TO OWN LAND LIKE ANY EGYPTIAN CITIZEN; FREE EDUCATION IN UNIVERSITIES AND HIGHER INSTITUTES, WITH FLEXIBLE REQUIREMENTS ON GRADE AVERAGES, ALLOWING PALESTINIANS TO ENTER ALREADY OVERCROWDED FACULTIES; FINANCIAL AID TO NEEDY FAMILIES; AND RIGHT TO OPEN A TRADING ESTABLISHMENT WITHOUT A PERMIT.

3. SALEM WAS CAREFUL TO EMPHASIZE THAT, DESPITE MOVES AGAINST PALESTINIANS IN EGYPT, GOE SUPPORT FOR PALESTINIAN CAUSE IS MATTER OF "IMMUTABLE STRATEGY" AND JERUSALEM, WEST BANK, AND GAZA MUST BE LIBERATED. NO "SOLITARY ACT", PERPETRATED BY THOSE FROM "INSIDE OR OUTSIDE OF ME AREA", WILL ALTER GOE STRATEGY.

4. COMMENT: GOE MOVES AGAINST PALESTINIANS IN EGYPT, COMING AMID SPECULATION OVER PLO COMPLICITY IN BOTH SIBAI ASSASSINATION AND LARNACA SHOOT-OUT, WILL PROBABLY BE POPULAR HERE. SALEM APPEARS TO HAVE TAKEN GOE ONE STEP CLOSER TO BREAK WITH PLO, BY REFERRING TO "THOSE WHO CLAIM LEADERSHIP OF PALESTINIANS" AND BY PROPOSING TO CANCEL SUBSTANTIAL PALESTINIAN PRIVILEGES HERE, BUT GOE COMMITMENT TO PALESTINIAN CAUSE ALSO WAS REAFFIRMED, ALTHOUGH EMPHASIS SHIFTED TO PALESTINIANS IN OCCUPIED LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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TERRITORIES. SOVIET EMBOFF REMARKED FEBRUARY 27, PRIOR TO SALEM SPEECH, THAT GOE MAY BE PREPARING TO WITHDRAW RECOGNITION OF PLO AS "SOLE LEGITIMATE REPRESENTATIVE" OF PALESTINIANS, BUT THERE NO INDICATION OF THIS IN SALEM REMARKS. MOVE, IN FACT, APPEARS MORE CLOSELY RELATED TO EGYPTIAN ANGER OVER LARNACA AFFAIR THAN TO ANY PEACE-PROCESS STRATEGY INVOLVING ALTERNATIVE PALESTINIAN LEADERSHIPS. AS SALEM LEGISLATION MOVES THROUGH LEGISLATIVE PROCESS IN COMING WEEKS, PALESTINIANS SHOULD HAVE AMPLE TIME TO CONSIDER PRICE THEY MIGHT PAY FOR CONTINUED VOCIFEROUS OPPOSITION TO SADAT'S INITIATIVES. EILTS

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